CENTERS for MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES

SUMMARY REPORT

DME PUBLIC MEETING

March 11, 2002

Introduction and Overview

Tom Grissom, Director, CMS Center for Medicare Management, welcomed the participants to CMS' first Durable Medical Equipment (DME) public meeting, and offered opening remarks appropriate to the establishment of this new forum for public input. David Clark, Director, CMS Office of Professional Relations moderated the meeting. Approximately 24 people were in attendance.

A general overview of the DME public meeting process and related requirements under the Benefits Performance and Improvement Act (BIPA) 2000 was provided.

The DME public meetings meet the BIPA requirements by permitting public consultation for coding and payment determinations for new DME, as explained in the Federal Register Notice published on November 23, 2001.

At these meetings, interested parties will be allowed the opportunity to make oral presentations and submit written comments regarding coding and pricing recommendations for new DME that have been submitted using the HCPCS coding modification process.

The process for development of the meeting agendas and speaker lists is explained in detail at
www.hcf.gov/medicare/hcpcs.htm

Before the public meeting, the CMS HCPCS workgroup met to review the coding requests on the meeting agenda and to make a preliminary coding recommendation. CMS also made a preliminary recommendation regarding the applicable payment category and the methodology that will be used to set a payment amount. These recommendations were presented at the DME public meeting.

Agenda Items

There was one item on the agenda for the March 11, 2002 meeting: HCPCS Request #02.04 - Request to establish a code for a push rim activated power assist add-on system for manual wheelchairs. This is the only request for new DME received between April 4, 2001, and January 28, 2002. Copies of the agenda were provided to participants, along with accompanying information regarding the agenda item.

Kaye Riley, CMS HCPCS Coordinator, presented a technical overview of the HCPCS workgroup preliminary coding recommendation to the National Panel, which included use of existing code K0108 – Wheelchair component or accessory, not otherwise specified, (with required documentation), because of low volume of documented use. Then Joel Kaiser of CMS provided a technical overview of the recommended methodology for use in setting the payment amount for the push rim activated power assist device. The payment rules for DME are located at Section 1834 (a) of the Social Security Act. Bill Russell, of Frank Mobility Systems, Inc., of Oakdale, PA, provided a presentation about the features of the E.motion push-rim activated power assist add-on system for manual wheelchairs. He followed his presentation with a demonstration of the product. Mr. Russell also shared his views regarding the uniqueness of the product and the need to establish a separate HCPCS code. He responded to a variety of questions related to the product, such as regarding cost, maneuverability of the wheelchair, and life expectancy of the batteries.

Closing Remarks

In light of new information provided at the DME public meetings, the HCPCS workgroup will reconsider its preliminary coding recommendations, CMS staff will reconsider payment methodology recommendations, and the workgroup will formulate its final recommendation to the HCPCS National Panel. Then the National Panel will reach a decision regarding the coding requests. By November 15, 2002, the HCPCS Coordinator will mail letters to every requestor of a HCPCS coding change, notifying them of the National Panel's decision. The HCPCS Level II annual update, including any coding changes, will be effective January 1st 2003.

There will be 2 more DME public meetings this year, on May 13th and June 17th. Both of these meetings will be held in the CMS Auditorium. On-line registration for these meetings can be completed at
www.hcfa.gov/medicare/hcpcs.htm